

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG**  
**WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**AGENDA**

**August 10, 2020 – 5:00 P.M.**  
**(THIS MEETING IS GOING TO BE A VIRTUAL MEETING)**

**Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**  
**<https://www.gotomeet.me/WatchungBorough/wildlife-advisory-committee>**

**You can also dial in using your phone.**  
**United States: +1 (669) 224-3412**

**Access Code: 256-958-701**

**You can enter your name. WMAC Members should enter their name so everyone on the call will see you as present.**

**This agenda is available for download from the Borough website.**

**Roll Call:**

C Kitt [ x ]	A Hokenson [ ]	R Barratt [ x ]
S Digiacomio [ x ]	P Michealis [ x ]	H Rubino [x ]

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**DISCUSSION**

1. **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting.**  
**approved**
2. **The Scope of WMAC.**

We have recently been asked to look into turtles and bats however some of us think the scope should be deer and geese only, so there is disagreement on what animals and items our group should be discussing. The ordinance does speak of deer and geese so it could be a role of the council to expand it. The idea of wildlife management suggests there are animals that need to either be conserved or are over populated and we need to be put into balance, we are not supposed to affect the environment but balance it. the group has to be confident they can handle the scope of what they take on. but what if something starts to become an issue whose job is it to monitor this and whose job is it to bring up as an issue to the town after it has already become an issue? usually it begins with residents bringing

up issues to the council. We should be focusing on areas that need the most help, not all things. We haven't even been able to fix the deer problem. No more 450 ft rule now 550ft rum, 2 sites, and sterilizing is expensive. At what point is the deer problem solved?

motion to expand beyond deer and geese, motion not passed

### 3. **Deer Data (if available).**

female deer have 2 fetuses a year, doing nothing means the population will increase meaningfully if nothing is done. A longer hunt season will allow for more autopsies of does to determine how many fetuses they are producing a year.

In the most recent count there were 650 deer counted, 2 years ago it was 165, then it was 240. So the question brought up is the accuracy of count showing such a jump in population in a year. Are we in agreement we have deer overpopulation in watchung? There is some disagreement, because the numbers are going down.

it's supposed to be 20/sq mile

Every year the cull is on autopilot no matter what the count says, most towns have some kind of parameters, shooting guns in town can be dangerous.

2003 2004 about 130-140 deer were culled and the population didn't fall.

cull under current conditions can't work alone to keep the deer population down.

We have guidance from Trenton, a blueprint that offers a logical approach, maximize the cull, and monitor to see if it's going in the right direction. What are trentons motivations?

with 2 sites we need to find alternatives to culling.

town opinion on deer? I believe a majority of residents approve of hunting. (need to confirm that) it's not the only option but it is the more practical one.

if there is a fatal car accident people will ask why we didn't do more if we knew the data.

Why not introduce archery if you are concerned about guns? no archery is still dangerous

Why not consider objectively sterilization? These are considered experimental and need to be approved by the DEP. groups are trying to change the minds of the DEP but the counsel can only do what is legal.

there are other things we would discuss and consider, let's work on some more things.

also deer move around so it makes sense to communicate with our neighbors.

subject tabled

a. Final end of year report for deer hunt- Fall 2019/Winter 2020

b. Police report for deer collisions

- Number of collisions

in 19 there were 22 accidents, not a large increase so that indicates there wasn't a major increase in deer population.

- Human involvement/injury
- Location of incidents

c. Deer carcass removal

- Numbers and location

### 4. **Fall Deer Count.** Follow up with RVCC to confirm or cancel the count.

How much does it cost? RVCC is academic and costs about \$2500.

generally a fall count is unfavorable given we always tend to do it in spring, after further review there is a way to conduct a fall count using certain parameters, accounting for lower cull and winter death and so it seems like a good idea. I have a lot of concerns around what these parameters are and the accuracy of them. Also the budget is tight during the pandemic.

motion to vote in favor of a fall count, motion denied but in favor of a spring count

5. **Deer Crossing Signs**. Identify areas highly trafficked by deer (Valley, Johnston Dr., etc.)

Simply put signs are a good way to notify drivers. Police accident data show you where they occur. There are deer signs on valley. also can lower the speed limit. cost of the signs unknown but maybe \$250.

motion on introducing signage, motion passes

#### 6. **Social Media Outreach**

Having community outreach about wildlife can be a benefit to the public. you can be inviting transparency and also controversy. it would have to be linked to the town's facebook page so the town can monitor it. there is a liability.

table this for now

**ADJOURNMENT.** The next Meeting of the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee (WMAC) is scheduled to be virtually held on Monday September 14<sup>th</sup>, at 5PM.